

News from Ed Markey

United States Congress

Massachusetts Seventh District

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34 LAWMAKERS CRITICIZE ADMINISTRATION'S ATTEMPTS TO MAKE NUCLEAR WEAPONS "MORE ACCEPTABLE" ON THE BATTLEFIELD

Markey letter opposes "bunker-buster" and targeting of non-nuclear states

WASHINGTON, D.C. --

Representative Edward J. Markey (D-MA), along with 33 colleagues, sent a letter to President Bush today expressing strong opposition to the development of a nuclear weapon for destroying underground weapons caches and to the use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear states.

"My colleagues in the Congress and I are very concerned about the use of a nuclear weapon in the battlefield," Rep. Markey stated. "With its reduced yield and specific, limited purpose, this 'bunker-buster' would have a lower perceived threshold for use. It would disperse dangerous radiation that would pose a serious health risk both to our soldiers in the field and to noncombatants in the area. If we are concerned about underground chemical and biological weapons caches, we should continue to develop earth-penetrating weapons with conventional-explosive warheads for this purpose."

Regarding reports that the administration's Nuclear Posture Review preserves the option of first-strike use of a nuclear weapon against non-nuclear nations, the letter states, "Threatening potentially dangerous-but still non-nuclear-nations with our nuclear weapons is not the way to convince them to abandon their own nuclear weapons programs. Rather, such threats will only strengthen their resolve to build their own nuclear arsenal."

The letter concludes by asking the President for "an unequivocal statement that [the United States] will neither consider using a nuclear weapon on a non-nuclear state nor develop a lower-yield nuclear weapon."

More information can be found at www.house.gov/markey/newsroom.htm

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